OGP Civil Society Steering Committee
Monthly Call: August
Key points of discussion and action items
August 9, 2016

Civil Society SC members in attendance:
Manish Bapna, Veronica Cretu, Mukelani Dimba, Alejandro Gonzalez, Nathaniel Heller, Suneeta Kaimal, Zuzana Wienk, J Preston Whitt (second for Nathaniel)

Absent:
Sugeng Bahagijo, Aidan Eyakuze, Warren Krafchik, Martin Tisné

Support Unit:
Tonu Basu, Alonso Cerdan, Paul Maassen, Kitty von Bertele

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1. **Debrief on meetings with French team in Paris**

***Discussion highlights*:**
The teams from WRI and the OGP Support Unit met with representative from the French government (including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Etalab) in Paris late July. The discussions focused on the strategic priorities for WRI and the French government for their year as Co-Chairs, in addition to conversations on the strategic refresh and plenary priorities for the Global Summit.

Manish reported back on the conversations. He shared that the lead OGP ministries in the French government - with President Hollande's support - are trying to involve other ministries and socializing the idea of OGP throughout the government. Meetings have been convened, including at the senior ministerial level, about what OGP means for France and objectives for the global summit. They are also in the process of fleshing out a draft note on their Chair priorities. This includes three thematic priorities - including a stronger focus on climate and sustainable development (and SDGs), deepening ongoing work on transparency/ public integrity/ anti-corruption, and digital commons. There are also several cross-cutting priorities including, focus on OGP's operating modalities or "rules of the game," new membership, deepening engagement with new constituencies (such as legislatures, subnational government, private sector, and others). Concerns were raised about the strategic priority that pertained to adding new members countries, before issues related to "rules of the game" and countries adhering to OGP values were addressed.

The SU reported back about the day-long workshop of the editorial committee (for more details about composition and highlights of the meeting, see here). The committee spent time discussing and shortlisting the 680+ proposals. Currently, the shortlist was at 140 and needed to be narrowed down further. The French team hope to announce the agenda at the OGP event in UNGA.

Action Items:
- WRI to share draft note on Co-Chair priorities with this group. The team will also reach out to schedule calls and meetings for feedback on these strategic priorities.
- SC members expressed their preference about discussing the issue of striking a balance between bringing in new countries into the partnership, while at the same time getting the "rules of the game" right in terms of country eligibility and other related issues that have been identified as ongoing challenges to country engagement with OGP values. SU to add this to the meeting agenda of the SC meeting in September in NYC.
- SC members and SU to think of effective ways to bring in the issue of domestic civil liberties at the Summit, with effective speakers and discussions in the plenary.
- SC members to reach out to their colleagues (Mark Robinson, Martin Tisne, Helen Darbishire) or SU staff who are on the editorial team, before the week of August 22, to flag any priority sessions or issues.

2. **Update on OGP events at UNGA**

***Discussion highlights*:**
Alejandro provided an update on the High-level Event co-hosted by the Governments of France and South Africa. As discussed the meeting will provide an opportunity to look back at the accomplishments of OGP - what works and what doesn't, as well as to look ahead at the collective work that lies ahead.

The group underscored the risk of the HoS event being perceived as a platform for "open washing" by governments. The Co-Chairs agreed that this could be a missed opportunity if civil society concerns and voices were not highlighted strongly, and if the event did not end up being action forcing.

SU shared updates about the Civil Society Leaders' breakfast, including securing confirmations from Darren Walker. Since the time of this call, Winnie Byanyima's office has reached out to the SU saying that unfortunately she will not be able to participate at the breakfast, though she will be there for the 5-year anniversary event.

SU also confirmed that as shared in a prior email, the orientation for incoming SC members and the meeting of the civil society members of the SC is going to take place on Monday. Responding to the draft schedule, SC members on the call agreed that the meeting needed to focus on strategic level discussions both on events and on priorities for the strategic refresh and the coming year.

Action Items:
● SU team to reach out to Alejandro, Manish, and Mukelani to discuss ways in which the HoS event can be made more action-forcing and strongly surface civil society concerns and voices (whether through strong statements or key messages by the co-chairs, encouraging countries like the incoming Chair Georgia to make a couple of sharp/bold commitments, and highlighting through Sanjay's address as well).

3. Update on SC community engagement efforts, to solicit civil society input for the OGP Mid-Term Review and Strategic Refresh

Discussion highlights:
Due to the lack of time, this item was not covered on the call. A blog to be published at the end of August sharing these plans with the community. SU will help spread the word about these interactions with the community. A member of the CSE team will be on each of the calls to support SC members, as they facilitate the conversations.

Action Items:
● SC members to confirm their availability for the calls/meetings as indicated on the draft calendar.

4. Update on cases under C/S subcommittee review

Discussion highlights:
Due to the lack of time, this item was not covered on the call.

Action items:
● SU will share updates on cases under review, including Azerbaijan, Hungary, Turkey, and a recent complaint that was made under the response policy on Israel.